

OM 022-2002 (1070) PRISON SOCIAL CLIMATE SURVEY - 2002



Operations Memorandum

NUMBER: 022-2002 (1070)
DATE: 5/16/2002
SUBJECT: Prison Social Climate
Survey - 2002

EXPIRATION DATE: 5/16/2003

1. **PURPOSE AND SCOPE.** To provide management with information for monitoring operations, evaluating the effectiveness of policy, and assessing progress to meet strategic planning goals through the Prison Social Climate Survey (PSCS).

The PSCS provides an opportunity for staff to convey their impressions about working and living conditions at the facility to which they are assigned. Topics covered in the survey include:

- # the care and custody of inmates,
- # safety and security,
- # crowding,
- # staff personal well-being,
- # staff/management communication,
- # staff training, and
- # the work environment.

The survey, administered annually at all Bureau institutions since 1988, has been reviewed by the Council of Prison Locals, American Federation of Government Employees. (An inmate version of the PSCS assesses inmates' observations about personal safety, prison living conditions, services and programs, and personal well-being, and is used only in conjunction with specific research evaluation efforts.)

The PSCS results are available in the Key Indicators/Strategic Support System (KI/SSS), both in the Executive Staff Module Menu and the PSCS Viewer.

Detailed instructions describing the procedure for distributing, administering, and collecting the survey will be sent to institution coordinators prior to the scheduled administration.

2. **SURVEY ADMINISTRATION DATE.** The Prison Social Climate Survey

administration will begin **October 21, 2002**. Surveys are not to be distributed before this date.

3. ADMINISTERING THE SURVEY

a. **Institution PSCS Administrator.** Upon receiving this OM, each Warden will appoint an institution PSCS Administrator to coordinate local administration of the survey and to serve as the contact person with the Office of Research and Evaluation (ORE) in Central Office. (Regional Offices do not appoint a PSCS Administrator.) Institution must notify the ORE by **September 4** the designated person's:

- # name,
- # position title, and
- # telephone number.

Notification may be sent via a GroupWise message to BOP-IPP/PSCS or by calling Ina Winn in the ORE at FTS 305-4195. The PSCS Administrator must be at the institution and available to participate in the administrative duties associated with this year's survey from **October 20 - November 1, 2002**.

b. **Staff Participation in Completing the Questionnaire.** Several weeks before the survey administration date, the ORE will provide each PSCS Administrator with a list of staff who have been selected to participate in the questionnaire administration. When possible, this list will be sent to PSCS Administrators via BOPNet GroupWise.

c. **Selection of Staff to Participate.** Staff are selected at random to participate, except for institutions that have fewer than 120 staff. At these small institutions all staff are selected to ensure that there are enough respondents to present results for each of the survey sections and for as many subgroups as possible.

Staff are preselected using scientific methods designed to ensure that they are representative of all staff at an institution. Questionnaires should not be distributed to staff who are not preselected to participate.

Staff complete the questionnaire voluntarily. At institutions where a random sample is taken, staff are chosen to participate in such a way as to ensure that the sample reflects the makeup of the overall staff.

Example: If 43 percent of an institution's staff complement is custody staff, the PSCS sample will be drawn to ensure that 43 percent of the staff sampled are custody staff.

d. **Vendor Responsibility.** The questionnaires, designed so that the responses may be optically-scanned, are mailed to each institution directly from Questar, the vendor selected to print, distribute, and process the questionnaires. Questar will ship the questionnaires to the institutions, so they arrive no later than **October 11, 2002**.

e. **Institutions Not Surveyed.** The following institutions will not be surveyed:

P USP Lee

P FCI Glenville

These institutions do not meet the requirement of being on-line with inmates for at least six months before the survey administration. Therefore, these institutions do not need to appoint a PSCS Administrator and may ignore any electronic messages sent to all institutions regarding the PSCS administration.

4. **SURVEY COMPLETION.** Institutions **must** conduct staff recalls (one or more, contingent upon local circumstances) for the survey's distribution, voluntary completion, and centralized collection. Institution executive staff are to encourage staff to respond to this survey.

The survey takes about 45 minutes to complete. Individuals who are unable to complete the survey during the recall must be afforded work time to do so.

5. **SURVEY COLLECTION.** The PSCS Administrator is to collect and return the completed questionnaires directly to the vendor **no later than November 4, 2002**. There are two methods for return:

a. **Centrally-Collected Questionnaires.** The institution PSCS Administrator is to return centrally-collected questionnaires (in particular from staff recalls) to the vendor as soon as possible (for example, immediately after the recall) via overnight mail.

The PSCS Administrator must maintain a record of the number of surveys and the **date and air bill number** of each box sent.

Staff who complete the PSCS outside of staff recalls may return them, sealed in the envelope, to the institution PSCS administrator for inclusion in the bulk shipments to the vendor (the vendor's preferred choice) or may return them directly to the vendor in the pre-addressed, business reply envelope provided.

b. **Individually-Returned Questionnaires.** Any staff who indicate they prefer to return their completed questionnaires to the vendor directly may do so using the pre-addressed, business reply envelope provided.

Completed questionnaires must be returned directly to Questar for processing no later than November 4, 2002.

c. **Unused Surveys.** Unused surveys must be returned to the ORE.

6. PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

a. **Confidentiality.** Individual responses are confidential. Data are analyzed statistically and only group responses are reported. Furthermore, reports based on survey results do not identify respondents in any way. Supervisors are not informed of who did or did not participate.

b. **Survey Results.** Results are distributed through the Key Indicators/Strategic Support System (KI/SSS), including the Executive Staff Module, where summaries of institution, national, regional, facility class, and security level aggregates are available.

ORE cannot analyze, summarize, and disseminate the results of the PSCS until all institutions have returned the completed surveys.

Each year, the results will be available via KI/SSS approximately two months after the completed questionnaires have been returned from throughout the Bureau.

c. **Response Rate Calculation.** The institution response rate is calculated by dividing the number of surveys returned by the number of staff who received the survey (see the following example). Staff who were not available to receive the survey because they had transferred, retired, resigned, or were on temporary duty (TDY) or extended leave, are not included in the response rate calculation.

Example: If 400 staff are sampled and 20 staff are not available to receive the survey then only 380 staff would have received the survey. If 320 surveys are returned to Questar the response rate would be: 320/380, or 84.2%

7. **SUPPORTING INFORMATION.** The PSCS is one of the methods that the Bureau uses to assess organizational climate and program performance. Other methods include:

- # Institutional Character Profiles (ICP),
- # Program Reviews,
- # operational reviews, and
- # objective measures drawn from management information systems (e.g., KI/SSS and locally maintained databases).

These methods constitute an integrated system that aids management in assessing how well institutions are accomplishing their missions.

8. **PSCS IMPROVEMENTS.** The ORE continuously monitors the PSCS and makes modifications yearly.

/s/

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